

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 8, 10 - 32, 34 - 39 and 41 - 54 are presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 13, 18, 25, 32, 34, 44 and 49 have been amended. Claims 9 and 40 have been canceled herein. Claims 33 and 55 - 62 were previously canceled.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that page 5 of the above-identified Office Action indicated that claims 9, 13, 18, 25 - 26, 40, 44 and 49 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended claims 9, 13, 18, 25, 40, 44 and 49, to place those claims into independent form. Independent claims 9, 13, 18, 25, 40, 44 and 49 are believed to be in condition for immediate allowance for the reasons given on page 6 of the Office Action, among other reasons. Claim 26 depends from the amended claim 25 and, thus, is additionally believed to be in condition for allowance

As such, for the reasons set forth on page 6 of the Office Action, among others, Applicant's claims are believed to be patentable over the prior art.

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On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1 and 32 were objected to on the basis of an informality. The Examiner's suggested corrections have been made.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1 - 8, 10 - 12, 14 - 17, 19 - 24, 27 - 32, 34 - 39, 41 - 43, 45 - 48 and 50 - 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U. S. Patent No. 6,043,499 to Seki et al ("**SEKI**") in view of Japanese Patent Publication 06 267 493 to Hisahide ("**HISAHIDE**"), further in view of Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 62 058 536 to Hiroyuki ("**HIROYUKI**").

Applicant respectfully traverses the above rejections, as applied to the amended claims. More particularly, in view indication of the allowability of claims 9, 13, 28, 25 - 26, 40, 44 and 49 on page 5 of the Office Action, and in view of the amendments made herein, Applicant's claims are believed to be patentable over **SEKI**, **HISAHIDE** and **HIROYUKI**. However, Applicant reserves the right to argue the patentability of the previously presented claims over the combination of **SEKI**, **HISAHIDE** and **HIROYUKI** in a continuing application.

It is accordingly believed that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, teach or suggest

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the features of claims 1, 13, 18, 25, 32, 44 and 49. Claims 1, 13, 18, 25, 32, 44 and 49 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claims 1, 25 or 32.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 - 8, 10 - 32, 34 - 39 and 41 - 54 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

It is believed that the application, as originally filed, included payment for four total independent claims. As such, a Credit Card Authorization Form, authorizing the payment of \$630.00 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16(h) for three additional independent claims, is additionally included herewith. Please charge any additional fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner Greenberg Stemmer LLP, No. 12-1099.

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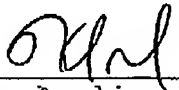
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Respectfully submitted,



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